

U.S. Department of Education
2011 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School

School Type (Public Schools):
(Check all that apply, if any)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Marlene Zucker

Official School Name: PS 159 Queens School

School Mailing Address: 205-01 33rd Avenue
Bayside, NY 11361-1029

County: Queens State School Code Number: 342600010159

Telephone: (718) 423-8553 E-mail: MZucker@schools.nyc.gov

Fax: (718) 423-8583 Web URL: schools.nyc.gov

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mrs. Anita Saunders Superintendent e-mail: ASaunde@schools.nyc.gov

District Name: NYC District 26 District Phone: (718) 631-6900

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Robert Caloras

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2010-2011 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2005.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 21 Elementary schools
(per district designation) 5 Middle/Junior high schools
5 High schools
0 K-12 schools
31 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 14052

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 20
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	19	32	51		6	0	0	0
K	42	38	80		7	0	0	0
1	45	30	75		8	0	0	0
2	51	42	93		9	0	0	0
3	40	34	74		10	0	0	0
4	37	38	75		11	0	0	0
5	53	45	98		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								546

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
44 % Asian
2 % Black or African American
18 % Hispanic or Latino
1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
35 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2009-2010 school year: 12%
 This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	33
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	31
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	64
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	539
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.12
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	12

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 11%
 Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 56
 Number of languages represented, not including English: 8
 Specify languages:

Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Dari, Korean, Spanish, Urdu

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 47%
 Total number of students who qualify: 234

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 15%
 Total number of students served: 79

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>21</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>16</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>37</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>24</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>11</u>	<u>4</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>14</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>19</u>	<u>5</u>
Total number	<u>70</u>	<u>9</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 23:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only high schools need to supply graduation rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any student or teacher attendance rates under 95% and teacher turnover rates over 12% and fluctuations in graduation rates.

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	98%	96%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	92%	94%	94%	91%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	5%	0%	8%	8%	8%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

The yearly attendance includes teachers who are absent for extended periods of time, sometimes for 30 days, prior to their maternity leaves. These blocks of time are computed into the average attendance. In addition, teachers are entitled to personal days or to take time under "FMLA" to care for family members. These circumstances may account for the overall daily attendance during a particular school year and are beyond the control of the school.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____ %
Enrolled in a community college	_____ %
Enrolled in vocational training	_____ %
Found employment	_____ %
Military service	_____ %
Other	_____ %
Total	_____ 0%

PART III - SUMMARY

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P.S. 159Q is a vibrant school that is housed in a three story U-shaped brick structure built in 1931 and sits in the middle of a neighborhood of modest homes. We are an economically and ethnically diverse community and for the past two years have qualified for Title I status.

Our vision at P.S. 159Q is one of a true partnership of administrators, teachers, parents, school staff and students all working together towards the same goal. We want our students to be independent and life-long learners who have the essential skills to succeed in today's society and to become responsible members of our global world.

Our mission is to achieve this vision by creating a safe, nurturing and educationally stimulating environment for all of our students. Through our commitment to standards-based instruction and the values of a multi-ethnic, democratic society, our dedicated school staff works diligently to provide our students with an exciting and rigorous instructional program.

We have forged a strong partnership with our school community. We use a variety of methods to provide our parents with opportunities to share ideas, offer suggestions and to support our programs as we continue to move forward. The School Leadership Team, PTA and Title I Parent Meetings, and school newsletters are some of the forums that encourage parent input.

In our effort to increase the parent involvement of our ESL population, we have school notices translated into home languages of our community. We also provide translators at our Parent Teacher Conferences, Parent Orientation Meetings and at Parent Workshops.

We are extremely proud of a program we designed with a neighboring school for children with disabilities. For the past fourteen years, we have welcomed many of their students into our early childhood classrooms as peer tutors. This is a mutually beneficial and rewarding program which promotes academic growth, increases the self-esteem of all of the students involved and sensitizes our children to the needs of others.

Our Student Council is an integral part of our school culture. Its primary mission is to provide opportunities for our student body and school community to focus their efforts on assisting others less fortunate than us, through numerous charitable events and fundraisers. One of our worthwhile endeavors included holding our Vocabulary Day Parade in conjunction with a March of Dimes Walkathon. Last year we raised more money than any other school in New York City, quite an accomplishment!

Thanks to the efforts of many of our staff members, we implemented the "Six Pillars of Character Development" program three years ago. The Pillars are: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship. Each year this program has been expanded and infused throughout the curriculum areas. From highlighting written student responses to read-a-louds to naming and constructing street signs that align with the "Six Pillars" for the school corridors, our parents and students are encouraged to support this program which promotes the development of strong core ethical values that transcend cultural, religious and socio-economic differences.

At P.S. 159Q, we are strong believers in recognizing student achievement and in celebrating the success of our students. We highlight a student of the month from each class, and display their picture and Certificate of Achievement in the main corridor of the building. We also recognize the importance of offering a well-rounded education and provide an exemplary visual and performing arts program. An 'Artist of the Month' is selected and the child's photo, biography and artwork are displayed in the entrance foyer of the building.

We offer programs to meet the needs of all of our youngsters while affording them opportunities to enrich their learning. Our Enrichment Cluster Program involves all of our students in grades 1-5 in a specially designed 8-10 week program. Our teachers create a cluster by identifying a personal interest or passion. The students are given a preview of the choices available to them and they select three possible clusters. The students have been actively involved in studying a wide range of topics such as mapping the migration of birds, researching and creating Indian jewelry, creating a new restaurant and establishing a business enterprise and so much more. This is the fourth year of this program and the interest and excitement that it generates has sparked the imagination and talents of both students and staff.

We at P.S. 159Q are committed to addressing the emotional, social and academic needs of every child. We are proud of our efforts and of our successes as we continually strive to enable every child to achieve his or her potential. We believe that our history of student achievement, strong community involvement and ongoing pursuit of academic excellence makes our school a deserving recipient of the prestigious Blue Ribbon Award.

1. Assessment Results:

We at P.S. 159Q are extremely proud of the level of academic success achieved by our students as measured by the NYS Standardized Assessments in ELA and Math. New York State reports the results of these assessments by converting the number of correct answers on a test into a student's "scale score." The scale score makes it possible to compare performance on the tests across different grades. Scale scores are divided into four numeric performance levels which are used as performance indicators. NYS Performance Levels are:

Level 1 = below standard

Level 2 = meets basic standard

Level 3 = meets proficiency standard

Level 4 = exceeds proficiency standard

It is important to note that NYS raised the bar and renormed both the ELA and Math Assessments in 2009-2010. Therefore, we can attribute the reduction in the percentages of children scoring at the 'meets proficiency standard' and/or at the 'exceeds proficiency standard' to this change. It is also noteworthy that P.S. 159's data for 2005-2007 included the performance of our sixth grade students. As of September 2007, P.S. 159Q no longer housed this grade.

"For the 2009-2010 school year results, the New York State Education Department raised the English language arts and math cut scores for the Basic and Proficient performance levels. Raising the bar in this manner has caused a statewide drop in the percent of students scoring at proficiency levels 3 and 4. A student scoring at or above the new Basic standard (Level 2) is on track to pass the English or math Regents exam required for high school graduation. A student scoring at or above the new Proficiency standard (Level 3) is on track to earn a college-ready score on the English or math Regents Examination.

In the July 28, 2010 news release, Senior Deputy Commissioner for P-12 Education John King stated, 'These newly defined cut scores do not mean that students who were previously scoring at the Proficient standard and are now labeled Basic have learned less. Rather, the lower numbers of students meeting the Proficient standard reflects that we are setting the bar higher and we expect students, teachers, and parents to reach even higher to achieve these new targets.'

Additional information can be found in the news release materials at:

http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Grade3-8_Results07282010.html

http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Regents_Approve_Scoring_Changes.html"

Based on an in-depth review of our quantitative and qualitative data on a variety of assessments, we have identified many trends and accomplishments. During the last five years, over 85% of all of our tested students have met or exceeded the State Standards, Levels 3 and 4, in ELA and over 90% have achieved this same level on the Math Assessment. We have shown a steady growth in the percentage of students performing at Level 4 on the ELA for the past four years. On the Math Assessment, 54% performed at Level 4, the first decline in three years.

In looking at the results of our sub-groups, we were pleased to note that almost all of the groups performed well on both assessments and were aligned with the test scores of all students. We did identify an achievement gap of more than 10 percent when comparing the percentage of students with disabilities

who met and exceeded proficiency standards with the test scores of all students on the ELA assessment. Of noteworthy importance is the fact that our student population included two self-contained classes of students in grades 4 and 5 who were placed in this program due to significant academic delays. All of these youngsters were required to take the appropriate grade level State Assessments in both ELA and Math, even though 66% of the fourth graders and 100% of the fifth graders had IEPs with modified promotional criteria. After completing an in-depth analysis of the individual student's results, and because we are committed to closing this achievement gap, we have revamped parts of our instructional program. We have structured mandated I.E.P. services to provide for a combination of push-in and pull-out services. These services are provided by specially trained teachers who work with these students in their classrooms or who address their needs in a small group in a different location. We have provided professional development on differentiating instruction to address individual students' learning styles and incorporated the use of the Pre-Intervention Referral Manual as a resource to identify specific strategies that can be implemented to address targeted needs. This Manual is published by Hawthorne Educational Services, Inc.

Being cognizant of the importance of having classroom teachers work closely with related service providers, we have arranged for weekly articulation meetings. This time allows for focused conversations revolving around student work, sharing of successful teaching methods and developing and monitoring short and long term goals. Teachers continually assess their student's understanding through informal and formal assessments, i.e., running records, Acuity, writing samples. All of these measures provide specific information on each child's strengths and weaknesses and provide the information needed to construct a viable individualized instructional plan.

Overall, we feel that the data reflects the continuous progress our students have made and their high level of achievement.

New York State testing information can be accessed through the NYSED website at:
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/ela-math/>

NYC test results can be found through the DOE website at
<http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/TestResults/ELAandMathTestResults>

2. Using Assessment Results:

PS 159Q uses assessment data to analyze and improve student and school performance in a variety of ways. Teachers monitor students' independent reading levels throughout the year. This data is utilized to create guided reading groups, differentiate class work and homework assignments, customize assessments and guide content area instruction for individual students and flexible groupings. Monitoring students' IRLs also gives teachers and students the necessary information to compile a "baggie" of books that students take home daily. Each baggie consists of three to four books at each student's independent reading level as well as one or two books at their instructional level that are intended to be read with the assistance of a more advanced reader in their household.

Teachers administer differentiated exams in all areas of the curriculum and then construct an item analysis in order to monitor the effectiveness of their instruction. Classroom assessments in the major core areas, as well as IRL and writing samples, are periodically collected by administrators in order to assist and support teachers in planning their instruction and identifying future teaching objectives. Teachers gather data from a myriad of sources including student portfolios, state exam results, parent-teacher conferences, individual student conferences, faculty/grade meetings, inquiry team work, Professional Development sessions and on line resources such as NYSTART and ARIS. This comprehensive analysis of the data is then used to customize instruction throughout all content areas with the goal of increasing student performance across the curriculum.

Assessment data is used systematically in the decision-making processes to improve teaching and learning. The school's core Inquiry Team develops an item analysis for the State ELA exam in each

grade. The team analyzes these results from the individual student, subgroup, class, grade and school perspective in order to determine patterns or trends related to student performance. Trends in the data are discussed at grade level inquiry meetings so that teachers and administrators can brainstorm strategies to improve instruction. Teachers then implement these new strategies in their classrooms and assess the impact on student learning. The results of these new strategies and interventions are a focal point of our professional conversations at monthly grade, faculty and inquiry team meetings and guide our work as we continue to explore new avenues that will raise the level of achievement for all learners.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

PS 159Q communicates student performance, including assessment data, to parents, students, and the community and ensures their understanding of the data by utilizing a wide range of media throughout the school year. Teachers at each grade level work cooperatively to create a set of content area performance rubrics that are designed to inform teachers, students and parents of the expectations for meeting and exceeding the end of the year standards for each grade.

The rubrics are sent home with students and are designed to be student and parent friendly, utilizing language that is clear, concise and free of educational jargon. The design of these rubrics provides clear performance expectations for teachers, students and parents and also ensures that student work is graded with consistency within and throughout the grades.

PS 159Q also utilizes parent-teacher conferences to ensure that all parents are kept well informed of each student's progress. Parents are afforded opportunities to meet with every teacher that is involved with their child's education. Translators are provided to assist our non-English speaking parents. Parents and community members are also informed of student performance at PTA meetings, through student report cards, progress report letters and frequent telephone or face-to-face conversations with individual teachers. During Open School Week, parents are invited into the school building to spend time in their child's classroom in order to observe instruction and gain further insight into the educational process at PS 159Q.

A newsletter from our Parent Coordinator is sent home to each family explaining the use of ARIS, the Achievement Reporting and Innovation System. Using ARIS, parents can access their child's standardized test results in ELA and Math, as well as their predictive Acuity results, early childhood assessments, attendance statistics and updated contact information. Parents that are new to the PS 159Q family, or that have not accessed the system in the past, are contacted through follow-up letters or by telephone. They are provided with a customized password and guided to set up an account and log into the system.

Additional letters that are sent home include information about using PS 159Q's website to access data about school statistics and performance information including the school's Annual Progress Report, Learning Environment Survey, Quality Review Report and Comprehensive Education Plan.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

PS 159Q has shared successful strategies with other schools in the district and with professional associations in a number of different ways. At the school level we have selected teachers in the areas of literacy, math and social studies to attend out-of-school professional development "lead teacher" meetings. These network meetings provide a forum for the lead teachers across the district to share information and discuss strategies on improving student performance. PS 159Q has also made arrangements for inter-visitations between our school and other schools in the Network for the purpose of sharing new instructional strategies and ideas.

Our school has organized a Literacy Book Club that is comprised of teachers and administrators. We utilize professional resources by authors such as Ruth Culham to guide our conversations, with the objective of sharing ideas for improving student writing and differentiating literacy instruction. Teachers

from PS 159Q document the notes from the Literacy Book Club online utilizing the ARIS system, so that other teachers within the district can also discuss and share the data.

PS 159Q's Professional Math Study Group, which is made up of teachers, administrators and the Network's Math Specialist, analyzes student work and shares best practices on improving mathematics instruction by encouraging student conversation through peer presentations. During these lessons the teacher serves as the facilitator as students assume the responsibilities for discussing, teaching and explaining their mathematical solutions to word problems.

We also invite experts from the field to work with teachers and selected students. Our Network Literacy Specialist has attended our Grade Inquiry Team meetings to gather and share data with and from other schools. PS 159Q's Principal attends Network meetings and shares the information gained with the Assistant Principal and teachers on staff. The Assistant Principal is part of a professional study group comprised of teachers and administrators from the Network that share information on differentiating instruction. Our school works with numerous student teachers and student observers from the community and state universities and shares ideas for best practices with them and their supervisors.

1. Curriculum:

P.S. 159Q's instructional program meets all the core requirements of literacy, mathematics, science and the arts. The integration of technology and providing effective remediation, enrichment and extra-curricular programs are all part of our goal in meeting the needs of all of the students in our school.

English Language Arts

Our Balanced Literacy Program incorporates a range of reading/writing approaches and follows the Workshop Model with an emphasis on active student participation and differentiated instruction. Units of Study provide for systematic and sequential instruction, introduce our students to a wide range of genres and scaffold the learning of all students so that they become proficient readers and writers. Students are guided to plan, draft, revise and edit their written work.

We are infusing the new Common Core State Standards in reading and writing with a focus on non-fiction. Students in all grades are being introduced to increasingly complex texts in reading. In writing, students are focusing on argument/opinion, informational and narrative writing.

Math

Our mathematics program places a strong emphasis on constructivist learning which focuses on student's conceptual understanding of mathematical ideas and concepts while recognizing the need to incorporate the teaching of mathematical skills. An example of constructivism would be students using problem solving in contexts in order to learn the meaning of an operation such as addition/subtraction or multiplication/division. This might happen in 2nd grade for addition or subtraction or in 3rd grade for multiplication. A wide range of approaches are used depending upon the needs and learning styles of each youngster. We are infusing our new Common Core State Standards in our mathematical teaching so as to develop a balanced program combining procedure and understanding.

Science

Our Science Program is based on the NYS Curriculum and combines a hands-on approach with research based instruction. We have a full-time Science Cluster who works with all children in grades K – 5 in a fully equipped science lab. The cluster teacher collaborates with the classroom teachers to align classroom and science lab instruction that ensures a balanced and comprehensive science program.

Computer Technology

We have a state-of-the-art computer lab and a full-time computer technology teacher. Children in grades K – 5 have access to the lab and laptops are available for use in the classrooms.

Our building is wireless and all classrooms have internet capability. We have Interactive Whiteboards in every classroom and in all of our support service rooms. They are used to support our instructional program as well as our Character Development assemblies which features interactive read-alouds. Technology is infused throughout the day and across all curriculum areas.

Physical Education/Health & Nutrition

In the past, our classroom teachers incorporated physical education instruction within the school day. This year we have a full-time cluster teacher who provides a comprehensive Physical Education program

supplemented by our classroom teachers. Our goal is for our children to develop an understanding of sound nutrition and good health habits that promote their well-being. We also participate in the Fitness-Gram Program which is a yearly assessment that measures a child's health related fitness; instruction is then differentiated based on the individual results. All of our students, grades K-5, participate in class lessons that deal with HIV/Aids prevention.

Visual/Performing Arts

We value the arts at P.S. 159Q. Through our Visual and Performing Arts programs, we are able to enrich our students' lives and afford them a multitude of experiences to develop their talents. Our full-time Art cluster provides instruction to all of our students and affords them opportunities to work with a variety of media. She collaborates with the classroom teachers to integrate art with the other curriculum areas.

We also have a part-time Choral Music teacher who provides whole class instruction as well as conducting a school chorus comprised of approximately 150 children in grades 3-5. Students perform in an annual evening Spring Choral Concert that is well attended by parents.

We have continued our partnership with the American Ballroom Theater Company and all of our fifth graders participate. This program incorporates literacy and the values taught in our Six Pillars of Character program with the performing arts.

2. Reading/English:

The reading curriculum at PS 159Q is based upon a Balanced Literacy approach which incorporates Units of Study and scaffolds the learning for all students in order to enable them to become proficient readers. This approach incorporates a wide range of activities that help students move from supported learning to independent learning. This program utilizes data such as running records, teacher conferences, student portfolios, teacher-made assessments and standardized tests results to assess students' reading skills. Teachers also gather this data to judge the effectiveness of their teaching and to guide future instruction.

PS 159Q chose this particular approach to reading because a balanced literacy program recognizes the differences in the way students learn and allows teachers to differentiate instruction based on each individual child's specific learning needs and styles. This approach also affords students an opportunity to explore a variety of genres and subject areas based upon their interests, while integrating the literacy standards of writing, listening and speaking as children write about and discuss what they have read. Classroom libraries are leveled according to the benchmarks from Teacher's College and students' IRLs are assessed on a regular basis in order to monitor student progress.

The school also utilizes Guided Reading to improve the level of our students' reading comprehension. In grades K-2 the focus has been on using context, visual and structural clues within stories to generate meaning. In grades 3-5 the focus has been on developing higher-level metacognitive skills in order to comprehend deeper levels of meaning within a text.

Students acquire foundational reading skills through teacher modeling of the reading and writing process. We provide additional instruction in vocabulary and word study skills through the implementation of the *Elements of Reading Vocabulary Program* for Grades K-5 and *Foundations* for our K-1 students. We also offer decoding and fluency programs such as *Perceptual Conditioning for Decoding* and the *Wilson Reading Program* to those students who need additional support in phonics.

To improve the reading skills of students performing below grade level, the school utilizes pull-out, push-in and extended-day programs. Students receive additional support that is provided by a full time ESL teacher, Reading teacher, two Speech teachers, two Resource Room teachers, as well as a part-time Literacy teacher who work with these students.

The school's core Inquiry Team as well the grade Inquiry Teams analyze student work and discuss strategies to help improve classroom instruction. Best practices are then shared with all staff members.

3. Mathematics:

PS 159Q's mathematics program utilizes the *Everyday Mathematics* program in grades K-3 and *HBJ Mathematics Plus* in grades 4 & 5. We align these standards-based programs with the workshop model to achieve our goal of enabling all of our students to apply their mathematical understanding to solving real-life problems. We provide additional differentiated instruction for all students using the *Exemplars Math* program to improve students' problem solving skills.

Our Professional Math Study Group focuses on improving mathematics instruction by utilizing classroom lessons that focus on problem solving and student conversation. The lessons afford students opportunities to assume the role of the instructor as they document their problem solving techniques and then explain the solutions through presentations to their peers. The teacher acts as the facilitator, guiding each lesson by utilizing mathematical language and higher level questioning techniques but allowing the students to discuss and explain their work and ensuring that the lessons are primarily student directed.

All teachers differentiate instruction in mathematics by adjusting the content, process, product and environment to address each student's educational needs and by delivering instruction that communicates clear expectations for all children. Teachers adapt lessons on a daily basis by including the use of manipulatives, visual aids, charts and technology to ensure that their math instruction is customized for the individual differences that are present within each classroom.

The school employs a variety of approaches to improve the mathematic skills of students who are performing below grade level. These include the utilization of pull-out, push-in and extended day programs where teachers can work with individual or small groups of students on specific skills. With the implementation of the new Common Core State Standards in 2014, teachers are beginning to use the Mathematical Practices from the CCSS as a guiding blueprint to elevate the rigor of their instruction and assessments across all grades. Teachers use data from the school's Progress Report, state exams, Acuity tests and end of year tests to further assess their student's learning needs on an individual, class, grade and school level. This data is also used to assess the effectiveness of teacher instruction, guide future teaching objectives and align our professional development sessions with the needs of our staff.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The Science program at PS 159Q emphasizes a hands-on inquiry based approach to learning where students construct their understanding of the natural world through problem solving and active exploration. In addition to science lessons being taught in the classroom, our science program is supported by a full time science cluster teacher who provides hands-on activities in a fully equipped science room, using advanced technology such as computer-aided microscopes and the Internet.

The activities and explorations designed for students in the science lab reflect PS 159Q's vision and commitment to standards-based instruction and to the values of a multi-ethnic, democratic society. Students often work in cooperative groups to problem solve, form hypotheses, experiment, draw conclusions and evaluate their work. These team-based experiences afford students the opportunity to learn essential skills, work together towards a common goal and to foster relationships with a group of their peers.

Our philosophy is that developing these skills will assist the children in becoming competent, lifelong learners and will prepare them to become responsible, ethical members of a democratic society.

Our Science Cluster also works with students who benefit from small group instruction and are in need of intervention services. She provides enrichment activities that challenge more advanced youngsters to extend their knowledge through guided independent research.

The school's science program is always looking for opportunities to reach out to parents and the community to further enhance student's educational experiences. PS 159Q is proud to be working with the Cultural After-School Adventure Program this year. The theme for this year's CASA is "City at Sea" and is based on the roles and responsibilities of the Intrepid crew members. The *USS Intrepid* is an aircraft carrier built during WWII for the United States Navy. It was decommissioned in 1974, and in 1982 the *Intrepid* became the foundation of the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum in New York City. This eight week program will afford students from our fourth and fifth grade classes an opportunity to learn about the Intrepid through hands-on explorative lessons that are designed to motivate and interest children in the areas of social studies, math and science. Sessions will include mapping the Intrepid's journeys, creating and breaking secret codes and conducting experiments that are related to water and aviation. PS 159Q staff members will be working with the museum educators to create a cross curricular program that is aligned with the high standards we have set for all content areas. The program will culminate with a trip to the Intrepid and a student created newsletter that highlights the students' experiences in the program.

5. Instructional Methods:

The instructional program at PS 159Q is differentiated across curriculum areas and throughout the school. Our overriding philosophy is that in order to maximize learning and meet the needs of diverse learners, teachers must be adept at modifying instruction both in terms of content and method of delivery. Factors such as students' interests, prior experiences and learning profiles provide a framework for teachers as they plan and implement a comprehensive and rigorous curriculum.

To meet the diverse needs of subgroups, teachers have utilized different resources including books on tape/CD, glossaries, graphic organizers, learning centers and contracts, literature circles, small group instruction for remediation as well as enrichment and journal prompts. Teachers have also varied the products that assess students' learning, affording students opportunities to present their learning in a variety of ways that are geared toward their individual learning styles. For example the same science lesson may be assessed by having students write letters to a scientist explaining a new concept, present their mastery of the concepts by illustrating cartoons or writing a song, or performing a skit or experiment for a class presentation.

Teachers construct classroom tasks that provide students with choices and regularly adjust the degree of difficulty based on the student's present level of performance, interest in the subject matter and prior knowledge and experiences. Teachers at PS 159Q often vary the degree to which they model a concept or provide peer coaching, increase or decrease the amount of structure a task contains, modify the amount of time students spend on an activity, or change a teacher directed lesson into a student video or on-line presentation.

Instruction is further differentiated through the provision of academic intervention services that encompass both a push-in and pull-out model and either individual or small group instruction. These services address the core curriculum areas and are provided by the classroom teachers, related service providers, our Communication Arts teacher and our literacy/math professionals. Detailed student portfolios are maintained indicating the level of achievement, the area of focus, the strategies being taught, the next teaching point and assessments that measure and monitor student progress.

6. Professional Development:

We believe that the best teachers are lifelong learners. To that end, our professional development is on-going and is provided on numerous topics across the curriculum.

Our monthly grade and faculty conferences are devoted to sharing best practices, sharpening content expertise and studying student work in order to improve instruction and student outcomes. Teachers work together to develop, revise and refine units of study and curriculum maps.

Being cognizant of the various teaching and learning styles that exist, many of our workshops have been designed based on teacher need and feedback. For example, each year we offer training on the use of the Promethean/Smart Boards on a variety of topics and levels of expertise. Teachers have the option of selecting the specific workshops that they feel will be most beneficial for their professional growth.

Our Network Specialists provide workshops for the entire faculty on such topics as ‘Achievement for All Children, Differentiated Instruction’ and ‘Unwrapping the New Common Core State Standards.’ They also work with identified teachers on refining specific skills. For example, professional development was provided to our K–1 teachers on implementing a multisensory phonics program called *Foundations* and our Special Education and Math Specialists work with our Special Education teachers on incorporating different strategies into the teaching of mathematics. Our Network Specialists conduct Lead Teacher meetings in Literacy, Math and Social Studies. We then provide time for these teachers to turnkey their learning to the entire staff.

We have formed voluntary professional study groups that meet beyond the official school hours. Our Literacy group is reading, *6 + 1 Traits of Writing* by Ruth Culham, and teachers use their classrooms as labs where as they can put their newly gained or extended knowledge into practice. The notes from the study group are posted on a website for all staff members to access. Our Math Study Group developed a school-wide problem solving rubric so that our students and parents have a clear understanding of the expectations at each performance level. This year we are working on devising tasks that provide students with opportunities to not only demonstrate their knowledge, but to extend it as well, while providing valuable assessment tools to improve instruction. For example, our fourth grade teachers utilized the *R.A.F.T.S.* technique as the structure for having their students gain content knowledge of Native American Life while becoming more proficient writers. As explained in Ruth Culham's book, *R.A.F.T.S.* is an acronym for: R-Role of the writer, A-Audience for the piece of writing, F-Format of the material, T-Topic or subject of the piece of writing, S-Strong verb.

In recognition of the importance of keeping abreast of the latest trends and innovative ideas, research articles on various topics are disseminated and discussed with the entire staff (Marshall Report).

7. School Leadership:

The role of a school Principal encompasses a myriad of responsibilities. It requires the ability to create a balance between managing and leading with the goal of maintaining a safe, nurturing environment where all members of the school community feel respected and valued and continually strive to ensure that each youngster reaches or exceeds his or her potential.

At PS 159Q, students, staff and parents are afforded numerous opportunities to be part of the decision making process. Our School Leadership Team, PTA Executive Board and Student Council members make decisions that affect our school community and include having input on instructional programs, devising ways to increase parent involvement and designing activities that increase camaraderie and school spirit.

Professional development is designed with teacher input that includes expressed needs and interests. Staff members are encouraged to attend workshops and conferences that they believe will increase their professional skills and translate into increased student achievement. Inter and intra classroom visitations provide additional opportunities for teachers to share best practices and demonstrate or observe exemplary teaching.

The principal recognizes the value of tapping into the talents of each staff member and the importance of acknowledging and applauding their efforts. Staff members are encouraged to be risk-takers and to take

responsibility for their teaching and learning. For example, teachers formed a professional book club and a math study group. The members selected the area of focus, devised a format for their meetings and determined the manner in which they would share their newly gained insights with the rest of the staff. The building supervisors recognize the importance of learning alongside the staff and are members of both study groups.

At the beginning of each school year, Grade Inquiry Teams are formed with all staff members participating. The members are empowered to select an area of focus and to set specific criteria for selecting the focus group of students. A teacher on each team assumes a leadership role by becoming the facilitator. The meetings provide a venue for brainstorming ideas and teaching strategies for the purpose of improving instruction by targeting the specific needs of each child. The Principal and Assistant Principal are contributing members of each team.

The Principal at PS 159Q is a person who has earned the respect of the school community and who guides us in our mission of maintaining Excellence in Education.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: NYS Testing Program - Math

Edition/Publication Year: 2009-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 & Level 4	83	100	98	100	100
Level 4	41	56	52	65	56
Number of students tested	66	90	66	68	80
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	87	100	97	100	100
Level 4	41	52	50	63	58
Number of students tested	39	42	30	32	26
2. African American Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	0	0		0	100
Level 4	0	0		0	55
Number of students tested	11	14		10	11
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	64	100	93		100
Level 4	18	20	40		30
Number of students tested	11	20	15		10
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Level 3 & Level 4	94	100	100	100	100
Level 4	45	74	69	76	74
Number of students tested	33	39	32	25	27
NOTES: NYS Math was renormed for the 2009-2010 school year. Hispanic subgroup: Every '0' in this subgroup represents suppressed data.					

11NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: NYS Testing Program - ELA

Edition/Publication Year: 2009-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 & Level 4	81	97	91	93	88
Level 4	28	19	23	18	16
Number of students tested	64	89	64	67	75
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	81	95	86	94	88
Level 4	32	20	10	19	4
Number of students tested	37	40	29	32	24
2. African American Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	0	0		0	90
Level 4	0	0		0	0
Number of students tested	10	14		10	10
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	73	90	73		73
Level 4	18	0	7		9
Number of students tested	11	20	15		11
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Level 3 & Level 4	75	97	91	87	88
Level 4	25	24	25	17	24
Number of students tested	32	38	32	23	25
NOTES: NYS ELA was renormed for the 2009-2010 school year. Hispanic subgroup: Data for levels 3 and 4 was suppressed for all school years between 2006-2010.					

11NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: NYS Testing Program - Math

Edition/Publication Year: 2009-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 & Level 4	99	99	97	99	98
Level 4	61	73	96	52	52
Number of students tested	92	70	70	85	84
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	98	97	97	98	100
Level 4	57	64	68	50	45
Number of students tested	51	36	31	42	31
2. African American Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	0		0	0	0
Level 4	0		0	0	0
Number of students tested	15		10	14	13
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	94	94	83	94	87
Level 4	39	61	33	24	33
Number of students tested	18	18	12	17	15
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Level 3 & Level 4	100	100	100	100	100
Level 4	85	88	72	71	59
Number of students tested	40	33	25	31	34
NOTES: NYS Math was renormed for the 2009-2010 school year. Hispanic subgroup: Every '0' in this subgroup represents suppressed data.					

11NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: NYS Testing Program - ELA

Edition/Publication Year: 2009-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 & Level 4	91	94	96	84	85
Level 4	21	18	19	11	11
Number of students tested	91	68	69	81	80
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	86	91	93	80	92
Level 4	18	6	10	5	19
Number of students tested	50	34	30	40	26
2. African American Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	0		0	0	0
Level 4	0		0	0	0
Number of students tested	15		10	12	13
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	61	84	75	44	57
Level 4	11	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	18	19	12	16	14
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Level 3 & Level 4	95	94	100	87	89
Level 4	31	19	25	11	18
Number of students tested	39	32	24	38	28
NOTES: NYS ELA was renormed for the 2009-2010 school year. Hispanic subgroup: Every '0' in this subgroup represents suppressed data.					

11NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: NYS Testing Program - Math

Edition/Publication Year: 2009-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 & Level 4	92	100	100	97	99
Level 4	56	63	58	42	47
Number of students tested	77	70	93	89	86
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	92	100	100	95	100
Level 4	50	66	64	35	44
Number of students tested	38	29	42	43	46
2. African American Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 & Level 4			0	0	100
Level 4			0	0	40
Number of students tested			14	14	15
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	88	100	100	86	93
Level 4	46	40	39	14	20
Number of students tested	24	10	18	14	15
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Level 3 & Level 4	95	100	100	97	100
Level 4	63	72	80	44	59
Number of students tested	40	25	35	39	32
NOTES: NYS Math was renormed for the 2009-2010 school year. Hispanic subgroup: Every '0' in this subgroup represents suppressed data.					

11NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: NYS Testing Program - ELA

Edition/Publication Year: 2009-2010 Publisher: McGraw Hill

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 & Level 4	80	96	96	83	91
Level 4	30	24	9	12	21
Number of students tested	76	68	90	86	80
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	73	96	93	73	94
Level 4	19	26	10	10	26
Number of students tested	37	27	40	41	31
2. African American Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 & Level 4			0	0	93
Level 4			0	0	29
Number of students tested			14	13	14
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	46	80	84	69	67
Level 4	8	0	11	8	0
Number of students tested	24	10	19	13	15
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Level 3 & Level 4	85	100	97	76	89
Level 4	44	33	22	8	22
Number of students tested	39	24	32	37	27
NOTES: NYS ELA was renormed for the 2009-2010 school year. Hispanic subgroup: Every '0' in this subgroup represents suppressed data.					

11NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 & Level 4	92	100	99	98	93
Level 4	54	64	58	43	44
Number of students tested	235	230	229	335	347
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	93	99	98	97	100
Level 4	50	60	61	48	46
Number of students tested	131	113	103	117	93
2. African American Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	83	97	0	93	100
Level 4	37	0	0	7	50
Number of students tested	35	31	30	53	59
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 & Level 4	83	96	96	94	83
Level 4	39	40	29	22	22
Number of students tested	53	53	45	51	54
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 & Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Level 3 & Level 4	97	100	100	96	98
Level 4	66	78	74	56	58
Number of students tested	116	101	92	128	125
NOTES: NYS Math was renormed for the 2009-2010 school year. Hispanic subgroup: Data for levels 3 and 4 was suppressed for 2007-2008 school year. Data for 2006-2007 and 2005-2006 included grade 6 information. This grade was truncated in June 2007.					

11NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 + Level 4	85	96	94	87	86
Level 4	26	20	16	13	17
Number of students tested	231	226	223	323	322
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 + Level 4	81	94	91	82	88
Level 4	22	17	10	10	17
Number of students tested	127	101	99	156	114
2. African American Students					
Level 3 + Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 + Level 4	91	0	0	0	92
Level 4	14	0	0	0	78
Number of students tested	34	30	32	35	37
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 + Level 4	57	83	76	44	55
Level 4	9	0	9	0	0
Number of students tested	53	53	38	50	55
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 + Level 4					
Level 4					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Level 3 + Level 4	86	97	96	84	89
Level 4	32	24	24	9	24
Number of students tested	113	98	89	120	107
NOTES: NYS ELA was renormed for the 2009-2010 school year. Hispanic subgroup: Every '0' in this subgroup represents suppressed data. Data for 2006-2007 and 2005-2006 included grade 6 information. This grade was truncated in June 2007.					

11NY14